International Fund for Agricultural Development was also approved. Some other decisions were in respect of the funding of the Regional Institute of Medical sciences, Imphal; giving more importance to the agriculture and allied sectors by providing full time Advisers in Horticulture, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry in the NEC Secretariat, and posting of officers for the NEC Secretariat to be made attractive by providing special incentives to attract talent from throughout the country. It was also decided to urge the Central Government to give high priority for early completion of the Jogighopa Bridge over River Brahmaputra.

Review of National forest Policy

958. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are reviewing the present National Forest Policy; if so, the salient features thereof; and

(b) whether it is a fact that several individuals and the NCPCLR have opposed the proposal to lease out forest lands to industrial houses; if so, what are the main points made therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) A proposal for "Involvement of Industry in Afforestation of degraded Forest Land", which incorporates certain modifications in the National Forest Policy, 1988 is under consideration of the Government.

The main apprehension expressed by the various agencies opposing the proposal are as under:

(i) Leasing and diversion of rich forest land for captive monoculture plantations.

(ii) Depriving of the tribals and rural folk of their traditional rights.

(iii) Joint forest management and other people's participation scheme will suffer.

(iv) Farmers who have gone in for agro-forestry on their private land will be deprived of market for their produce since industry's would prefer to plant up degraded forest land.

(v) The scheme will result in fragmentation of forests as industry will want to grab patches as and where they like.

Recognition of Hindi as Official Language of the UN

959. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present status of India's permanent membership of the Security Council and at what levels the PM raised the issue and with what results;

(b) whether Government have recently taken up initiative for the recognition of Hindi as the official language of the UN;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, whether Government has at any stage taken up the issue formally; and

(e) if so, the present status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L.BHATJA): (a) Question of Security Council restructuring is being discussed in a Working Group set up by UN General Assembly. India has expressed willingness to serve as permanent member of the Security Council. PM has raised the issue in his bilateral discussions with several world leaders.

(b) to (e) The introduction of Hindi as an official UN language has engaged the attention of the Government for several years. Introduction of a new UN language requires majority support of member states in addition to large financial implications. Our consultations